



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Belfast Mela 2014
Date:	13 February 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Stockman, City Park Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee is asked to note that the Council has received a request from the Director of ArtsEkta to use Botanic Gardens for the Belfast Mela on 24th August 2014</p> <p>The Mela is a multicultural festival that has attracted 20,000 people annually from all communities across Northern Ireland. The Mela has been successful in raising cultural awareness, encouraging civic identity and promoting a positive image for Belfast and Northern Ireland.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The Council wishes to promote the use of its parks and open spaces and where appropriate we will permit the use of these facilities for large events and concerts.</p> <p>The key issues are :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In this particular instance the Council has received a request for use for Upper and Lower Botanic Gardens for the Belfast Mela on 24th August 2014 from midday to 6.00pm. Depending on funding and availability of Lower Botanic Gardens, it is proposed that the Director of Parks is given delegated authority to make a decision regarding the use of Lower Botanic Gardens for the proposed event later this year.2. The proposed timescale from set up to take down of the event is eight days 19th to 26th August 2013 inclusive in Botanic Gardens.

	<p>3. Due to the economic climate ArtsEkta has requested permission to collect an entrance fee in the region of £3 per adult depending on funding for the event. It is proposed that Director of Parks and Leisure is given delegated authority to agree the admission fee prior to the event based on the timely provision of financial evidence.</p> <p>4. The event shall be subject to the preparation of an event management plan which shall cover all aspects of management including health and safety, access and will comply with the current events policy.</p> <p>5. A legal agreement will be provided by Legal Services</p> <p>6. Consultation by ArtsEkta will be undertaken with other local stakeholders such as Queens University, Lyric Theatre, local residents groups and the Friends of Botanic Gardens.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The Bond of Intent shall be waived but the Bond of reinstatement of £1000 shall be provided by ArtsEkta as in previous years per event.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There may be overtime required by staff to assist with the management of the proposed event.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u> ArtsEkta shall ensure all minimal impact on Council property and will provide a Bond of reinstatement prior to the event.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	<p>There are no equality implications as the event promotes cultural diversity and recognises minority and local indigenous groups</p>

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is asked to grant permission to ArtsEkta to provide the Belfast Mela in Botanic Gardens subject to the development of an Event Management Plan and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of Parks and Leisure and on condition that :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event organisers resolve all operational issues to the Councils

	<p>satisfaction;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriate legal agreement, to be prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor is completed and • The event organisers meet all statutory requirements including Health and Safety and Licensing • The organisers be permitted to charge an admission fee in the region of £3 to access the Botanic Gardens for the event if deemed necessary to support the financing of the event and • Grant delegated authority to the Director of Parks and Leisure to vary the admission fee subject to the provision of financial evidence by ArtsEkta to support this decision. • Grant delegated authority to the Director of Parks and Leisure to permit the event to also include Lower Botanic Gardens subject to availability and available funding when confirmed by ArtsEkta. • Permit Closure of Botanic Gardens on the 24th August 2014 to permit admittance by Mela tickets holders only.
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6.	Decision Tracking
	All actions to be completed by City Park Manager (East)

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Letter of request from ArtsEkta